

Message Text

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62

ORIGIN NEA-06

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A - JHOWE (DRAFT)

H - EBURKE

DOD - MR. ACKLEY (SUBSTANCE)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: OREP (MATHIAS, CHARLES MCC. JR.)

SUBJECT: CODEL MATHIAS VISIT TO DAMASCUS

REF: STATE 9261 AND PREVIOUS (NOT SENT DAMASCUS)

1. REFTELS COVER PROPOSED VISIT OF SENATORS INOUE, MATHIAS AND BROOKE OF FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE OF SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE TO EGYPT, JORDAN, AND ISRAEL. GROUP WILL BE IN ISRAEL FROM THURSDAY JANUARY 23 AT 0930 UNTIL 11:00 MONDAY JANUARY 27. WHILE OTHER SENATORS STAY IN ISRAEL, SENATOR MATHIAS (R-MARYLAND) INTENDS TO TAKE ONE DAY OFF -- POSSIBLY FRIDAY JANUARY 24 -- TO MAKE ROUND-TRIP TO SYRIA. HE ANTICIPATES FLYING IN AND OUT ABOARD USAF C-135 (EQUIVALENT TO BOEING 707) WHICH TRANSPORTING CODEL INOUE FOR PORTION OF TRIP.

2. MATHIAS INTEREST IN VISITING SYRIA SPRINGS FROM INVITATION EXTENDED TO HIM BY FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM DURING KHADDAM VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN AUGUST 1973. WHILE IN DAMASCUS, MATHIAS WOULD LIKE TO HEAR SYRIAN VIEWS ON THE
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MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.

3. REGRET THAT VISIT HAS TO BE SO BRIEF, BUT ENTIRE SENATORIAL MIDEAST TRIP HAS ENCOUNTERED SERIOUS SCHEDULING PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF UNEXPECTED BUSINESS INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING NEW CONGRESS, AND CODEL HAS ALREADY BEEN FORCED DROP TWO COUNTRIES (MOROCCO AND PORTUGAL) FROM ITINERARY.

SENATOR MATHIAS' OFFICE INFORMS US THAT CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS ARE SO ACUTE THAT HIS PARTICIPATION IN TRIP COULD STILL BE JEOPARDIZED BY EVENTS BETWEEN NOW AND GROUP'S DEPARTURE FROM WASHINGTON ON FRIDAY JANUARY 17 AT 1910.

4. YOU SHOULD GIVE SARG PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF PROPOSED VISIT SO AS TO CONFIRM THAT THEY HAVE NO OBJECTION TO VISIT BY SENATOR MATHIAS ON OR ABOUT JANUARY 24. YOU MAY TELL SYRIANS WE EXPECT HAVE FIRM WORD WITHIN FEW DAYS. WE WILL INFORM YOU AS SOON AS PLANS FIRM AND REQUEST DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCE FOR USAF FLIGHT TEL AVIV/DAMASCUS/TEL AVIV. KISSINGER

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